E
467
.1
.W69

Wilkes, George.

"McClellan" who he is and "what he has done." and Little Mac "From Ball's Bluff to Antietam."

Class E467
Book .M2W68

"McCLELLAN:"

WHO HE IS

AND

"WHAT HE HAS DONE,"

AND

LITTLE MAC

"From Ball's Bluff to Antietam."

BOTH IN ONE.

REVISED BY THE AUTHOR.

By AN OLD-LINE DEMOCRAT.

PRICE, $5 PER 100.

New York:

THE AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY, WHOLESALE AGENTS,
121 Nassau Street.

M. B. BROWN & CO.,

Book, Job, & Newspaper Printers,

201 AND 203 WILLIAM STREET,

(COR. FRANKFORT,) **NEW-YORK CITY.**

This establishment invites the attention of the public to its superior facilities for the prompt and proper execution, upon the very lowest cash terms, of every description of

POLITICAL PRINTING,

SUCH AS

PLAIN AND ILLUMINATED POSTERS,

PLACARDS, HANDBILLS,

CIRCULARS, CAMPAIGN PAMPHLETS,

ELECTION TICKETS, &C.,

ALSO

BUSINESS CARDS, BILLHEADS,

SHIPPING BLANKS,

PROGRAMMES, BY-LAWS, BALL TICKETS,

ORDERS OF DANCING, Etc.

SPECIAL ATTENTION PAID TO THE PRINTING OF

LAW CASES,

POINTS AND BLANKS,

M. B. BROWN & CO.,

201 AND 203 WILLIAM STREET,

MARTIN B. BROWN, CHARLES STURAK, } **NEW YORK.**

"McCLELLAN:"

WHO HE IS

AND

WHAT HE HAS DONE."

AND

LITTLE MAC:

"From Ball's Bluff to Antietam."

BOTH IN ONE.

REVISED BY THE AUTHOR.

By AN OLD-LINE DEMOCRAT.

PRICE, $5 PER 100.

New York:

THE AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY, WHOLESALE AGENTS,
121 Nassau Street.

E467
.M2W68

McCLELLAN INSIDE AND OUT.

"Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin."

"Unto my God three times I daily bow;
But, little coxcomb knight, pray what are thou?"

The human mind is unfortunately so constructed that it may temporarily become the prey of any passion. There is no falsehood so startling, no theory so repugnant, no imposition so extreme, that it may not find shallow waters in the mind for its reception, and retentive harbors of belief. In turn, men have worshipped at the shrine of the toad, the fox, the serpent, the bull, and even the dripping tiger. In turn, again, there have been idolaters who have abased themselves before hideous shapes of wood, who have adored the elements, who have made sacrifices to the sun and stars; and there have been, also, even those who, disdaining the celestial competition, have turned their backs upon the entire Pantheon, and founded a worship to "The Unknown God." History has exhibited itself in the same way in regard to rulers; and it frequently renews its lessons of the transient fame of the unworthy by dropping them from the end of the pipe-stem, where they had some time pranced, to the gross level of unrelieved contempt. Merit alone can stand the test of time; and charlatans and humbugs, though tolerated for a season, are invariably detected by the people, and driven off the public grounds.

There are many curious features in this philosophy of popularity; but none more singular than the fact, that nearly all sudden reputations will prove to have been built upon an inverse ratio of merit; while substantial characters ever wear the continuous inspection-marks of years. There is something, however, so delightful in delusion, and admiration makes so light a draft upon the thought, that most persons take to it with a powerful relish, and once a hurrah is afoot, the inclination to join in takes like an epidemic. Man is an imitative animal; a yawn will go round an audience through a mere sympathy of the jaws, and when we have beheld courts and juries perverted from their judgments by the very magnetism of a surrounding sentiment, and seen law-loving communities trample the statutes under foot,—when, stranger still, we have seen whole nations take a baboon, or a reptile, for their deity, or glorify some monarch for a conqueror who dared not look upon a sword, it is not so surprising that the present generation should be willing to swallow a hero who might have been cut out of a turnip, and who owes his whole character to the nature of his uniform.

One of these singular infatuations is prevailing now. A portion of our population, irritated by defeat, disturbed in its ideas, and bewildered by a crisis which it cannot comprehend, fastened its hopes, in an unlucky moment, upon a boyish leader, upon the mere warrant of his own pretensions. The careless observer, while glancing at McClellan, might permit himself, through a love of country, to rejoice at the weaknesses of character which seem guarantees against a dangerous ambition; but in these defects, and in that want of promptitude and courage which result in imbecility, lie the concentration of all danger. The crafty and unprincipled, may easily possess a weak man; and once he has lent himself to oblique counsels, the very best qualities that he possesses—those qualities that express faithfulness to friendship, and loyalty to personal alliances—are made the auxiliaries of the darkest schemes.

The field for our analysis is clear. There were no special obstructions in McClellan's path to glory. Everybody contributed their aid to make him a great man. The President lifted him to the most dazzling authority in the nation; the universal voice accorded him the qualities of Cæsar; a lavish country placed incomparable and astounding legions in his hands, and the whole world looked on, to see this child of genius launch his quintupled thunders upon his meagre and cowering game. Now let us see how all this came about, and what came of it.

George B. McClellan was born in the free State of Pennsylvania, and after receiving an education at West Point, embarked upon the world with a second-lieutenancy in the United States Army. After passing through the Mexican war, simply as an engineer, and without exhibiting for his brevet any soldierly souvenirs of battle, he selected for his residence the extreme South, and soon became conspicuously known as a Northern man, with Southern proclivities and principles. While living in Louisiana he was noted for his intimate companionship with Pierre Toutant Beauregard, and when that little Creole ran as a candidate for the mayoralty of New Orleans, he built an earthwork and temporary barricade within the city, to resist a threatened assault by his opponents, and placed his bosom friend, George B., in charge of the redoubt.

Send-offs in life are the texts of future history. We soon find McClellan deeply identified with Southern fillibustering schemes, and trace him, in natural course, to a prominent command in the league of the Lone Star. The objects of that association notoriously were the conquest of Cuba and its annexation to the South, in the interests of slavery; and it is plain that McClellan, from his intimate intercourse with the leaders of the movement, was thoroughly familiar with all the aims of the conspiracy.

General Quitman, of Mississippi, was the chosen generalissimo of the movement. The five officers next in rank to that leader were Albert Sidney Johnson, Gustavus W. Smith, Mansfield Lovell, Q. K. Duncan, and George B. McClellan. The terms on which these West Point gentlemen were engaged were ten thousand dollars cash to each, and Cuban contingencies, which took the promissory shape of future acres and vast hordes of negroes. But for the fear of offending the sensibilities of McClellan's peace democratic friends, we would say, that all of the above gentlemen but him have since turned traitors, and have openly embraced the rebel cause.

Smith, Lovell, Johnson, and Duncan received their money, and resigned from the United States Army, as a natural preliminary to their new engagement. McClellan (whether he got his ten thousand dollar fee or not) also

sent in *his* resignation; but, luckily for him, Governor Marcy, who was then Secretary of State, seized the Lone Star vessels at Mobile, and "ended up" the illicit expedition. The question of Lieutenant McClellan's resignation, therefore, which had been lying in abeyance for some days, was soon afterward withdrawn. But this facility of restoration had a secret. McClellan was, and long had been, a pet of Jefferson Davis, then Secretary of War, and that distinguished patriot saved him his commission. Indeed, he owed his little Northern *protege* no less; for it was he (Davis) who had pushed him (McClellan) so far into the unlucky Lone Star affair, by sending him, at the expense of the United States, on a preliminary mission of secret military observation to the Island, which was to be stolen in the interest of the Southern States.

The failure of the Lone Star expedition left our young hero without any definite prospects, but his good fortune kept Jefferson Davis at the head of the War Department, and that excellent man, wishing to reward George still further for his devotion to the South, promoted him to be a captain of infantry, and then raised him to the dazzling station of Chief of the Commission of Observation which represented the army of the United States before Sebastopol. True to these favors, and the tendencies which they created, he, after his return, united himself with the Breckenridge Democracy, the plot of which, on the part, at least, of its Southern engineers, was to either throw the election to the "House," or, by the return of Mr. Lincoln to the Presidency, to seize the opportunity for revolution.

Now, these antecedents furnish us the cue to the problem which for a long time bewildered all loyal men in the extreme; and we at last can understand the secret of that wondrous approbation with which the high appointment of the young captain, as our Commander-in-Chief, was received by Southern generals and Dixie journals. The veil was lifted, too, from what had puzzled us the most, and that was, the miraculous unanimity with which every man of secession principles and doubtful loyalty among us agreed upon McClellan's transcendant talents as a chieftain. Loyal citizens would occasionally differ on his merits; but if a man ever so lightly tinged with "Southern Rights" would come in hearing, the peace patriot would be sure to fly into a rage, look threateningly at the critic, as if he more than suspected him to be an Abolitionist, and swear that everybody was in a conspiracy to ruin poor Little Mac! It is true that hundreds of loyal, well-meaning men honestly did the same thing; but while there were some among them who did not, the secessionists adored and lauded him without exception. Throughout the South the same phenomenon was visible, and we would continually hear the Confederate journals saying that the Yankees had but one great general, and the Abolitionists were trying to ruin *him!*

The distinguished object of such singular laudation could hardly be insensible to its effects. Human nature is governed by a few simple laws. We love those who love us, and it is repugnant to all good-feeling to injure and despitefully use those who speak well of us. By the very excellence of his nature, therefore, McClellan was emasculated of a great portion of that vigor and devil which is the first requirement of a fighting general, and he must have painfully felt, in his moments of self-examination, that it was his misfortune to be so universally appreciated. There was one course, however, that was still open to him, and which would obviate the stern necessity of shooting off "Our Southern Brethren's" heads, and arms, and

legs. A course, too, which, in the end, might be acquiesced in by Jeff. Davis himself, and give no unappeasable offense, even to Beauregard, or his *confreres* of the Lone Star Expedition.

This was a great country; it had great institutions and great oceans on either side of it. The American eagle ought to flap his wings over the entire continent, for the benefit of millions yet unborn. It was a shame for *brothers* to be fighting in this way about trifling points of difference, and the thing must be "fixed up." He (McClellan) was just the man to do it. In the South, he was Hannibal; in the North, Cæsar and Napoleon together; and he might, therefore, under the scope of his great place, so manage his campaign as to drive the enemy into a convention, instead of into battle *a l'outrance*. He was backed by the resources of a great country; he felt that he could demonstrate his superiority to his Confederate rivals as a soldier, to the same extent he had outstripped them as a student in the Academy; and, when at last, by bloodless strategy he should have them cornered, he would signify to them that they had better lay down their arms, be good and loyal citizens again, and *he* would arrange matters so that everything "would be lovely," and they would have all their "rights."

We do not positively assume this theory in his favor, but it is not entirely inconsistent with the tame nature of his loyalty; and, to say the truth, it is the best we have. And, if perchance we are correct, we can almost imagine the broad and humane expression which must have spread over his benevolent countenance as this superb idea irradiated and relieved the previously agitated depths of his philosophic mind. In the dim vista of the future he might behold himself toga'd on a pedestal, crowned with the olive as well as with the laurel, and continually alluded to by poetic orators as the second "Father of his Country."

We find much to harmonize with this idea His *debut* was made with the announcement that we would carry on the war with as little loss of life as possible, and we have seen that, though the enemy, in vastly inferior numbers, kept thrusting the rebel flag under his nose at Fairfax Court-House; nay, did the same at Munson's Hill for several months, he would not give our "Southern brethren" battle. They even blockaded the Potomac on him; nay, with one-third of his numbers, they reduced him to a state of siege, and made daring raids upon his lines from day to day; but the hour had not come to strike the crushing blow (perhaps to needlessly exasperate the feelings of both sides), and he bore the taunts and humiliations of his position with wondrous fortitude. What probably was the most embarrassing part of his position was the restless chafing of the two hundred thousand bayonets at his back for an advance; and the only consolation that could possibly have supported him in his trying situation was the consciousness that his motives were correct, and that his plan would bring the country out all right *in the end*.

He was rather unlucky, though, for the war was terribly exasperated in the West by Grant, Foote, Pope, Mitchell, Wallace, Rosecrans, and Curtis, and in the South-west by that rare old Governor, Ben. Butler, and by Farragut, and Porter. In the South-east the same was done by Burnside, Sherman, and Dupont. The East, where we had the most troops and the *greatest general*, was the only place where nothing was done at all.

It was something to our Young Napoleon, nevertheless, that the People kept gazing upon him in a sort of admiring trance, and, though they could not by any means penetrate his plans, they hurrahed for his amazing silence

and inaction, and offered to "bet their lives" (as fifty thousand did, and los them) that Little Mac wasn't keeping so still for nothing, and that, by-and-by, he would come out all right."

At length, Little Mac did move; and, on his own judgment, he chose the route to Richmond by the way of the Peninsula. It was not a very direct road, for it obliged him to embark and debark a vast army, and make a long trip by sea—a process that is always somewhat demoralizing to troops, and always very filthy. The cost of the job was worth, in cash, probably some sixty millions.

The choice of route was therefore thought to be a little singular, and some querulous civilians likewise thought it strange, that, having so long refused the opportunity to strike the enemy at Manassas, with quadrupled numbers in his favor, he should take a roundabout road, for so great a distance, to receive odds against himself. This, however, was regarded as impertinent, and the Young Napoleon went his way, backed by the hopes and confidence of the whole nation. He took one hundred and twenty thousand men with him, which was all he asked for that time. He requested more, and the Government forwarded him the divisions of Franklin and McCall, and others, until he had received one hundred and fifty thousand men, and there was but nineteen thousand and twenty-two left behind for the defense of Washington. The Administration, which has been so roundly villified for not having sent him more, could not spare another soldier, for the divisions of McDowell and Banks were the necessary stays against the enemy at Fredericksburg and Warrenton, and there was no surplus in commission. The Young Napoleon might, however, have had them all, had he remained at Washington, and moved with them upon Richmond from that point; for he would thus have been enabled to cover the capital and the valley of the Shenandoah at the same time, and to have kept the odds, too, on his own side.

But he preferred a more profound and complicated policy, and the result of it was, that the enemy caught him right in the midst of his brilliant strategy, and drove him pell-mell out of it, so that he burned his tents and stores, and fled for a week, leaving his guns in large numbers, and his wounded and his dead behind him. Instead of driving the enemy to the wall, they ran *him* into the mud, and brought him to a terrible standstill for months. The main results, therefore, of his brilliant strategy were, that he cost the country about five hundred millions of dollars, prolonged the war at least two year, reduced his army practically to seventy thousand men, and in addition to paralyzing it for months, as he once before paralyzed the grand Army of the Potomac, he actually water-logged the navy also, for he "tied up" several hundred vessels (transports and men-of-war) in the simple duty of feeding and protecting him The minor results of his genius were the dejection of the country, a deluge of shinplasters, the sneers of Europe, the hisses of Oxford, the invigoration of the rebel cause in Parliament, and the confident side-whisper of old Palmerston to his rampant Commons that a few months longer would bring a still better chance for intervention. Well might the French Princes and Mr. Astor leave him in disgust, and well might his political orators notify the people that his acts are sacred from analysis, and that he is a great general, *for they know it.*

Now, we have arrived just at the point of this article where we wish to state that we believe he is neither a great general nor a great man; and to further express our conviction that he is entirely unfitted, by reason of men-

tal inferiority, for any broader military task than the management of a brigade.

There are many ways of testing intellectual capacity, and we know of no case easier for this purpose, than McClellan's. He is a military adept, and he cannot plan; a soldier, and he cannot fight; a scholar, and he cannot write. There is no one of his dispatches that will bear the analysis of a schoolboy; not one of his bulletins which is not bloated with bombast; not one of his statements that is not vague, foggy, or "purely unintelligible."

He first sprang into the public ring at Rich Mountain like an acrobat or a rope-dancer. The battle of that name was really performed by Rosecrans; but, though a simple operation, it was well-conceived, and, notwithstanding McClellan was not present, it, by the laws of practice, accrues to his credit, as the senior officer.* Well do we bear in mind the tenor of the telegram by which he announced this victory to the world; and we here put it as a point of inference, whether a man, who, after years of laborious scholarship, can be so grossly inexact in the deliberate use of words, can reasonably be expected to exhibit any mental method in planning a campaign; or to develop accuracy, while arranging battalions amid the perturbations and the heat of action?

"The success of to-day," says our Napoleon, "is all that I could desire. We captured six brass cannons, *of which one* is rifled, all the enemy's camp equipage and transportation, even to *his* cups. The number of tents will, probably, reach two hundred, and more than sixty wagons. *Their* killed and wounded will amount to fully one hundred and fifty, with one hundred prisoners."

* * * "*Their* retreat is complete. * * I may say we have driven out some ten thousand men." * * *

Then, after some further grandiloquent display, he closes with the following literary cross, between the styles of Mr. Merryman and Uriah Heap:

"I hope the General-in-Chief will approve of my operations."

"Does the razor hurt you, sir?" says the barber, when conscious of his lightest touch. "A little applause, if you please, ladies and gentlemen!" imploringly looks Mr. Merriman, as he crosses his legs and throws out his fingers from his lips, after a clever summersault. There is but one step between the sublime and the ridiculous; so the public, not looking for a mountebank, and being struck with this strange style, picked Little Mac up for a Napoleon.

Then came the proposition for a bloodless war—imagine the old Napoleon doing that! Next came the cruel exoneration of General Stone, and the wanton defamation of the heroic Baker, who was immolated to their united blunders at Ball's Bluff; next Napoleon's *low*-toned reflection upon the misfortunes of McDowell (who would have harvested his victory but for the creature Patterson), by pompously proclaiming "No more retreats; no more defeats; no more Bull-Run affairs." Then followed his repeatedly pretended preparations for a battle, and his prescient declaration that the closely-impending conflict would be "short, sharp, and bitter," though time has revealed that, while saying so, he did not mean to fight at all. During all this while, he went riding up and down the lines, assuring "the boys" that if they would "stick by him, he would stick by them," and occasionally

* By the same rule, however, he is fully responsible for the dreadful blunders and butchery of Ball's Bluff, for that, the first of his operations as Commander-in-Chief, was planned and ordered by himself.

telling them, in the imperial vein, to have no fear, for he would expose his sacred person, with them, in the dangers of the field.

We next find young Napoleon at Yorktown, before the head of an army, with which Old Napoleon would have marched all over Secessia, and back again, in six months; but instead of taking the meagre city by assault, and giving the North and East an opportunity to square accounts of glory with the West, his bloodless strategy was again put in play, and he distributed the shovel instead of drawing forth the sword. At length the Confederates, having retained him four full weeks to secure the arrival of their reinforcements from the South, made, at their leisure, a masterly retreat, the details of which lasted through four decorous days. Nay, a single spontaneous rebel, with a solitary gun, which he fired on his own hook all night, after the Confederates were gone, stayed the progress of our army for several hours more. Now, mark what our Napoleon did. He did not throw up redoubts before that man,—though under his Crimean affliction of mud upon the brain, he must have been sorely tempted, to such course,—but, having ascertained that the enemy had indeed marched out, he immediately sent off a handful of dispatches, stating in set terms, that he had *won a brilliant victory!* Yes, *victory* was the word! Nay, not satisfied with this, and though the enemy had burned all their refuse, and lost not a single wagon, the little Mars, on the following morning, sent off another flood of telegrams, announcing that our *victory*, at Yorktown, had proved to be even more *brilliant* than he had at first supposed. This gross misuse of language would seem to indicate either a conscious want of fighting prestige, (did we say of courage?) or an ignorance of the true weight of words; but if neither this nor that, then he must have intended to foist a false idea on the public. But the climax of this grand absurdity was yet to come, and it did come, in the shape of another telegram, so miserable in its character, so measly with humility, that our cheek still tingles at our share of the disgrace, sustained through it, by general human nature:

"May I be permitted to allow my troops to inscribe YORKTOWN on their banners, as other generals have done?"

This is so pitiable, and, for a commander-in-chief, so deplorably mean-spirited, that we do not care to dwell upon the picture. It could hardly look worse if he had sent the same application to Jeff. Davis, on the subject of the Chickahominy! But the Confederate President had undoubtedly "approved of his operations" in that quarter.

Next came the affair at Williamsburgh, where the rear-guard of the enemy, finding us pressing after them too closely, turned grandly back, and gave us bitter battle. The fight lasted for some seven hours; General McClellan, according to his custom, arrived upon the field after the strife was over, and, having reined up near Hancock's brigade, was made cognizant of their brilliant closing charge. Ignoring, thereupon, all other features of the day, he sent off a dispatch in which he gave credit to that brigade alone. The credit was, doubtless, well-deserved, but it had been earned by an incidental operation, lasting not over forty minutes, while the divisions of Hooker, and Keese and Kearney, and the Excelsior Brigade of Sickles, had been breathing the red flame of battle for six or seven hours. The other reports, however, exhibited the gross injustice of this single compliment, and, at the end of several days, we find Napoleon reluctantly putting forth another bulletin, in which he says, in substance, that *had he known*, when writing his first dispatch, of the gallant services performed by such and such divisions

and brigades, he would have done them justice at the time; and in degree as he should learn who else behaved with spirit, he would award *them* equal praise. Was ever any confession, that was extorted under threatened consequences, more abject and contemptible than this!

But there is a crowning absurdity and contradiction yet to come, as in the case of the Yorktown telegram; only we regret to say, that the climax, in this case, is more serious than in the other, and hardly reconcilable with ordinary common sense. Two or three days after this latent recognition of a brave army's toils and sacrifices, General McClellan reviewed Hancock's brigade, and having expressed a few words of warm eulogium, he is reported to have said, "You saved our army from disgrace!" Was ever statement like this heard before from a commander, about his army? Who was it that, but for this small squad, would have betrayed us to disgrace? Was it the *corps d'armee* of the grim old Heintzelman? Was it Hooker's or Kearney's, or Sickles' gallant men? Or, was it any, or all of the regiments whose prowess he had recognized but two or three days before? We do not wish to press the matter, and we hope it is not true. If it be not, it should be denied, for it is too heavy a weight for even Ajax to carry with decorum down the aisles of history.*

The next dispatch of our hero relates to the battle of Fair Oaks, where Casey's skeleton division was precariously posted on the far side of the river, and so far in front as to invite the assault of some forty thousand men. This exposed handful of inexperienced troops, lately recruited from Pennsylvania and New York, of course, recoiled, as did the veterans at Shiloh, under the stunning blow; nevertheless, and though hundreds of them strewed the field, they rallied, and bravely withstood the pressure of the superincumbent foe for full three hours, at the astounding cost, in killed and wounded, of one-third of their entire number. The Commander-in-Chief, according to the reports, did not arrive upon the field until the fight was fairly over. Then gathering the details, probably from fugitives, he dashed off a dispatch, which he ostentatiously dated "From the Field of Battle!" in which he virtually denounced the whole division of the old veteran as cowards. Lo, in about ten days afterward, he was obliged to swallow one-half this dispatch, as he did that of Williamsburg, and to acknowledge that he, the Commander-in-Chief, who dated his dispatch so blushingly "from the field of battle," had been *misinformed* about the matter. The other half, however, still rankles in the hearts of many a man and woman in the Empire and the Quaker States, whose sons and kinsmen drenched that cruel field in expiation of the fatal strategy of Young Napoleon. The shabby recompense was perforce accepted, but not a citizen of either State, whose stranded youth have been thus fearfully defamed in death, can lightly pass it from the mind.

But he was not yet done with despatches, even in relation to this battle; for in the face of the fact that the enemy had driven him from his camp, with the loss of many guns, and that they had slept upon the very battle-ground, our Young Napoleon announced from his waist-deep location in the marsh, that he had gained a decided advantage over them, and secured a better position than before. Subsequent events have shown, however, that if the position to which he was thus ingloriously pushed was better, the former must have been hell itself. This is certainly a fair conclusion, for in a few days afterward he was driven from the last, at a cost of fifteen thou-

*It was true.

sand men and about thirty cannon; while nothing but the strange valor of our soldiers, and the talent of their able marshals, combining with the fortunate drunkenness of certain Confederate generals, saved our whole force from absolute destruction. The latter series of actions which effected this result opened at three o'clock on the morning of the twenty-sixth of June, but McClellan did not make his appearance on the field until some four or five hours afterwards. The fight thus opened lasted seven days, but though we have read all the printed letters within our reach about the matter, we fail to find more than one mention of Napoleon, during the prolonged *melée*, and that mention spoke of him and his staff as riding briskly to the rear, while whole columns were sweeping the other way to the attack. A strange epilogue to the "stick by me, and I'll stick by you" orations!

Yes, at the close of affairs we get another glimpse of him, but then he had made port, and was high up in the rigging of the Galena, with a spy-glass in his hand, surveying the turmoil on the shore. He may have been in the centre of every hot encounter, dealing death upon the rebels with his own good sword, but we have failed to hear of it; and it has not been our good fortune to find a single tribute, from any mercurial reporter, describing the modern Napoleon's coolness when some ball fell near him, or noticing the pleasing smile which overspread his face, when the dirt thrown up by some adjacent shell consecrated him with the real baptism of battle. These reports are so usual in campaigns, that it is singular they should be omitted in this case, and the conclusion, therefore, is, either that the reporters were exceedingly remiss, or that no such scenes of signal hardihood occurred.*

The first dispatch which our young Commander wrote in relation to this week of battles, was, as the London *Times* has said, about his plans, "purely unintelligible." By dint of study, however, and acute translation, we gather from it the general idea that he has outmanaged the enemy, though by these repeated successes it seems that he has been terribly reduced, and forced again to relinquish the musket for the spade, and find shelter between his gun-boats and redoubts.

The dispatch which announced this *fiasco* to the world, again claimed an improvement of position, and with the deliberate intention of imposing on the country. Napoleon announced that he had lost but one siege gun. The *claquérs* took this as a cue for their hosannahs, and encouraged by this unexpected demonstration, our hero sent off a semi-official letter, stating that the enemy had *retreated*. It was probably true that but one "siege" gun had been lost, but we were entitled to know how many guns of other calibre and fashion were lost with it. It was not true, in any point of view, however, that the enemy had *retreated*, for McClellan knew perfectly well that they, having driven him to a cowering shelter under protection of his men-of-war, had merely fallen back to a position consistent with their base of operations.

We turn now to another feature of this tragedy. Lee, finding McClellan thoroughly disposed of, and anchored hopelessly amid the mud at Turkey Bend, directed his army against Washington, by the northern route. Under timely information of this movement, the Government concentrated those of its forces which had been retained on the south of the Potomac, and placed them

*The testimony taken before the Committee on the Conduct of the War has developed the fact that McClellan, during these seven days of battle, would always, after posting the troops, ride to the rear to select a position for the next day's retreat In plain terms, he ran away from every fight, and left his corps commanders to conduct the action.

under the command of General Pope, an energetic commander who had been serving in the West. The danger to the capital was imminent; so General Halleck, acquainting McClellan with its urgency, directed him to abandon his useless position on the James, and hurry to the relief of the Army of Virginia, which was then making a diversion against Lee, in order that he (McClellan) might escape. Instead, however, of obeying the instincts of a soldier, McClellan paltered with the order, and in an impertinent dispatch, asked for more troops to resume his operations against Richmond. Ten precious days were thus consumed, until finally positive instructions required him to re-embark, and bring back his regiments to Alexandria. Still, after that, seven more days were dawdled out, and it was not till Lee had struck Pope with the weight of his entire force, that the dilatory army of McClellan had returned. It landed at Alexandria on the 24th of August, 1862. Obeying the impulses of their profession, Hooker, and Kearney, and Stevens, gathering their divisions, pushed forward to the front, and found four days of battle, while Franklin and Porter, the pet generals of McClellan, remained with him, idle and sullen, on the very spot where they had debarked. The earth throbbed with the sound of the contending cannon, yet while the destinies of his country were thus trembling in the balance, and Kearney and Stevens went down in their heroic efforts at Chantilly, McClellan sat on a smooth hill-side, quietly smoking his segar, predicting Pope's defeat while refusing him any reinforcements. At length, the President, on his own responsibility, ordered Franklin forward, but the contumacious Cæsar stopped him on the road. Finally, Pope begged a little forage for his starving cavalry, but Mac denied this also, and, in keeping with this act, Fitz-John Porter at the same moment turned from the front, and forced the Western general, who was thus hopelessly betrayed, to fall precipitately back. All the country understood the scheme, and expected to see McClellan and his satellites made subjects for a corporal's guard. They did not bargain, however, for the influences of the other parties to the compact, and, consequently, were perfectly amazed to behold Little Mac not only emerge from his complication, but actually sail off again in full command, with the traitor Fitz-John Porter, and all his other satraps smiling in his train.

Lee, being thus left master of the field, turned north, with the audacious purpose of invading Maryland, while the shattered remnants of Pope's army, falling back within McClellan's lines, constituted the latter, through his mere ranking privilege, again the commander of the whole. It was then that the Government, disturbed by the reports that the corps commanders would serve cordially under no other generalissimo but McClellan, yielded to the apparent necessity of the hour, and recommissioned him with the task of stemming the invasion.

He went apparently in pursuit of Lee, but instead of cutting off his retreat by a rapid flank march to Harper's Ferry, he lounged leisurely after him, over good roads, at the rate of five miles a day, with a view of getting in his front and shooing him harmlessly out of the State. Hooker, under similar circumstances, followed Lee for three days, at the rate of 20 miles a day, and placed himself in front of Washington, in time to save it. Lee remained in Maryland for full nine days, and then, reeling with plunder, left at his leisure, sending Jackson in advance to conquer Harper's Ferry, as a *bonne bouche*, and to cover his retreat. Franklin was within seven miles of this ill-fated post, with a whole division, and listened tamely to its bombardment for several hours. Its unfortunate commander had been begging earnestly

for reinforcements for two days, the President had ordered McClellan to relieve it, and *he* reported he had transmitted orders to Franklin to that effect. But reinforcements were ignored in the "conservative" tactics of our strategic generals, and, with this so-called "order" in his pocket, Franklin remained stock-still, and permitted the important post to fall. Lee, then, elated by his fortune, and disdaining the man with whom he had to deal, seems to have been seized with the idea of trying to see whether McClellan could be made to fight, under any circumstances whatever; so, with but fifty-five thousand effective men, he had the hardihood to take position, with a river in his rear, against a force posted on a rising ground, and numbering, at the least, one hundred thousand men.

The history of the action is well-known. Hooker opened it, and, while driving the enemy in splendid style, went down with a shot in the foot. It was well for him that he did. He would soon have needed *reinforcements*, and, not getting them, would probably have fallen with a ball in his head. That had been the fate of Baker, at Ball's Bluff; of Kearney and Stevens, at Chantilly; and the early hour at which Hooker got his wound warded him from the fate of those examples, and doubtless saved him to the country.

The battle went on feebly, lingering all that day without one grand attack; and presently, when night approached, *Burnside* required reinforcements. The reporter of the *Tribune* describes his aide arriving at headquarters with a request for help. McClellan turned an inquiring look towards Fitz Porter, his familiar, who stood at his elbow with thirty thousand unused men. That practised soldier, says the unsuspicious chronicler, gravely and slowly shook his head, whereupon McClellan replied to the imploring officer —"Tell General Burnside he must hold his position until dark; that this is the battle of the war!" The young reporter doubtless took the secret correspondence, which passed between the eyes of the two chief actors of this scene, for military prescience and profundity. The intelligent reader will now, however, translate this look in quite a different way. This battle was, to us, the most disastrous of the war. The enemy, by McClellan's own admission, slept upon a portion of the field, and yet he had the effrontery to proclaim it as a victory. On the following day, though we had thirty thousand fresh reserves, the rebels were allowed to bury their dead, and repose within our view, and the next night they moved leisurely off, without the loss of another man. To finish the climax, the Commander-in-Chief, as if in a spirit of half-malicious waggery, reminds us, on the third day, of the picture of Pickwick playfully chasing his hat, by the suggestive telegraphic line,

"*Pleasanton*, with his cavalry, is in close pursuit of the enemy."

It was a fit epilogue to the disgraceful scenes of Centreville, and a worthy instance, in the line of precedents, to warrant the subsequent tactics of Franklin before Fredericksburg. Thus we find that McClellan, who began by disobeying orders under Scott, who endeavored to exchange the Capitol of Washington for Richmond when in the Peninsula, who abandoned Pope to the mercy of the foe at Centreville, who would not put the rebels to the sword at Antietam, and who flatly refused to obey the orders of the President to follow them to Winchester, actually controlled the destiny of the army until ignominiously expelled from its command in the first week in November. He did not go into exile, however, undefended, or without angry protests in his favor. The services he had rendered to the hostile cause were too signal for him to be left without a party; and, moreover, it was plain he was of just the right material to be made a rallying-point of opposition to the Govern

ment. A tory howl was therefore set up for him at once; the cry of "persecution" was put upon the wind, and, at the same time, with a bare-facedness which made everybody laugh, it was claimed that he was a military genius who excelled the great Napoleon.

It was supposed at first, by those who imagined he had courage, and who desired him to play the role of a dictator, that he would not obey the relieving order which required him to report at Trenton. But he very tamely packed his trunk, and taking an affectionate leave of *his* army, moodily turned his charger's head toward the Capital. It was a tableau not exactly like that of the farewell of the first Napoleon at Fontainebleau, but still it is worthy of some American artist, and should not be lost to the cartoons of the Capitol. Its contrast with our hero's ostentatious entrance into Washington a year before is well worthy of the historic canvas; and though we have not a Vernet or a De la Roche to do the subject justice, it might at least be consigned to the patriotic Ackerman, who has a genius for such subjects, and a capacious paint-shop in Nassau street, near Ann.

It may be considered rather fortunate, in some points of view, that we have not the keen and terrific perceptive faculties of a Trumbull or an Ingres, to group around the retiring chieftain, as he slowly picked his way through the blinding snow-storm, which aptly accompanied the close of his career, the fleshless forms and eyeless sockets of the hundred thousand dead, whose reproachful moans mingled with the wind that drifted him from off the field. That would furnish a painful recollection to the People, rack many a parent's bosom, and fill many a widow's eyes with tears; while, on the other hand, the buoyant brush of Ackerman, charged with its usual cheerful lights, could represent him in the most glowing print-shop fashion, looking three ways with equal strength of feature, and severally labelled, Cæsar—Marlborough—McClellan.

We have thus traced McClellan through the operations of this war. If there is one transaction creditable to him we have failed to find it; so we leave him with the final comment, that he has proved himself, in every way, qualified to be the candidate of the white-feathered peace party who have nominated him; and quite worthy, also, of the chosen friendship of ex-general Fitz-John Porter, who stands stricken from the army rolls, for having betrayed his comrades and his country on the field of battle. Should we be surprised, therefore, that the rebel host behind the works of Petersburg, on hearing of his nomination at Chicago, made the air ring with their applause?

AN OLD-LINE DEMOCRAT.

THE AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY,

No. 121 NASSAU STREET, N. Y.,

FURNISH DEALERS WITH

Books, Magazines, Newspapers, Dime Publications, Novellettes, Ten-Cent Publications, Song Books, Music, Lithographs, Pens, Pencils, Diaries, Almanacs,

Stationery of all kinds, Domestic and Foreign, and, finally, all the THOUSAND ODDS AND ENDS *required by the trade, at prices that defy competition, and with the utmost promptness.*

For the character and standing of our House, we are permitted to refer to all the publishers of New York, Boston, or Philadelphia, and to our standing in the trade for the past TWENTY-THREE YEARS.

Trade-Lists, Circulars, and full and complete information in regard to our method of forwarding goods furnished on application.

Publishers of Books, Magazines, and Newspapers, who may desire a reliable House in this city to act as agents for their publications, are requested to communicate with us. Our facilities for selling any work are unequalled, as we have customers in all the principal cities in the United States, to whom we ship goods daily.

We are exclusive agents for, and take the whole edition (except mail subscriptions) of

Army and Navy Journal,
Albion,
American Union,
Clipper,
Banner of Light,
Boston Pilot,
Dollar Newspaper,
Frank Leslie's Illustrated,
Frank Leslie's Zeitung,
Familien Blatter,
Flag of our Union,
Herald of Progress,
Home Journal,
Irish American,
Independent,
Literary Companion,
Living Age,
Metropolitan Record,
New-York Ledger,
New-York Weekly,
New-York Tablet,
New-York Mercury,
New-York Illustrated News,
New World,
National Police Gazette,
Philadelphia Saturday Post,
Scientific American,
Scottish American,
True Flag,
Union League,
Wilkes' Spirit,
Waverley Magazine,
Wide World,
Atlantic Monthly,
Appleton's Guide,
American Knickerbocker,
Arthur's Home Magazine,
Beadle's Dime Novels,
Song Books, &c.,
Ballou's Dollar Monthly,
Book of Days,
Boston Ten-Cent Novelettes,
Comic Monthly,
Chambers' Miscellany,
Leslie's Ten-Cent Monthly,
Leslie's Magazine,
Budget of Fun,
Hall's Journal of Health,
Lady's Friend,
London Lancet,
Monthly Novelettes,
Mr. Merryman's Monthly,
Monthly Sketch-Book,
Nick-Nax,
Phunny Phellow,
Portrait Monthly,
Waverley Magazine,
Continental Monthly,
Madame Demorest,
National Quarterly,
Monroe's Dime Books.
Redpath's Publications.
Braithewaite.

We also supply all other publications published in this country or Europe.

THE AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY,

No. 121 NASSAU STREET, N. Y.,

SUCCESSORS TO

SINCLAIR TOUSEY & H. DEXTER, HAMILTON & CO.,

GENERAL AGENTS FOR PUBLISHERS.

WILKES'
SPIRIT OF THE TIMES.

The American Gentleman's Newspaper.

A CHRONICLE

OF THE

Turf, Field Sports, the Army and the Stage.

"WILKES' SPIRIT" is the great Sporting Paper of America. It is now the only Spirit of the Times in existence—the Old Spirit and Porter's Spirit both having become merged in its existence. From its superb Sketches; its masterly Criticisms, Military as well as Literary; its graphic and detailed Reports of the Turf, the Ring, the Road, the Field; its current Accounts of Hunting, Fishing, and Shooting; its Departments of Cricket, Base Ball, Billiards, Chess, Draughts, and other Parlor Games; and its profuse and matchless Musical and Dramatic Literature, it has justly been characterized as the "American Gentleman's Newspaper." As such, it has united on its staff the ablest writers on its various specialities, and has long been recognized as the only sporting authority in America. Its circulation is second to but one other weekly journal in the country, and its chief boast is, that while acquiring this vast prosperity, it has earned, by its careful morals, and its chaste propriety of language, a respected place on the family centre-table.

TERMS: $5 00 per annum.

GEORGE WILKES,

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

Office, 201 William Street, N. Y.

THE AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY, WHOLESALE AGENTS,

No. 121 Nassau Street, N. Y.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 013 700 164 0